An-Nisaa'

Lajna Imāillāh Canada

Sept 2020 - Dec 2020

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Moral Training of Our Children

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- To make a request for an announcement in An-Nisaa' in English or Urdu, please contact your Local Secretary Ishā'at or Sadr Sāhiba.
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  - Nikāh, Wedding or Walīmah Ceremony
  - Birth of a child
  - Āmīn ceremony (completion of the first reading of the Holy Qur'ān) of a child
  - Miscellaneous requests for prayers
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Donation Amount:
Member Name:
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In the Name of Allāh, the most Gracious, the ever Merciful!

Lajna Imāillāh Canada's

An-Nisaa'

Volume: 32 Issue: 3
September to December 2020

A magazine for the moral and spiritual training of Lajna Imāillāh Canada

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From the Holy Qur'ān

The English translation of the Arabic verses is rendered by Maulvi Sher Ali Sāhib[ra].

وَ الَّذِيْنَ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ اَزْوَاجِنَا وَ
ذُرِّيّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ اَعْيُنٍ وَّ اجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ اِمَامًا ﴿۷۵﴾

And those who say, 'Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of *our* eyes, and make us a model for the righteous.' (25:75)

Hadīth: Saying of the Holy Prophet[sa]

Respect Your Children and Give Them the Best Education

Narrated by Ḥaḍrat Anas bin Mālik, Allāh be pleased with him: Said the Prophet of Allāh (peace of Allāh be on him and His blessings):

"Respect your children and cultivate in them the best of manners." (Ibn Mājah)

Explanatory Note

...The truth is that no nation can make any progress, nay, no nation can escape degeneration, if its members do not leave behind their children in circumstances better than their own.... On the contrary, moral training or discipline is infinitely more important than secular education and certainly has a greater moral value and status. An educationally less qualified but morally better disciplined person endowed with qualities of industry, truthfulness, honesty, self-sacrifice and pleasing manners, is far superior to the man carrying the donkey-load of knowledge but totally bereft of qualities of moral excellence. In the Holy Qur'ān, the injunction, "Kill not your children," (6:152) and (17:32) hints at the truth, that if you ignore inculcation of good moral qualities among your children and neglect their educational equipment, you will be virtually committing their murder.

[Forty Gems of Beauty, pg. 78-79, Hadīth no. 15]

A Note from the Editor

Our beloved Imām, Hazrat Syedna Khalīfatul-Masīh V (may Allāh be his Helper) addressed Lajna Imāillāh at the occasion of Jalsa Salana UK (Annual Convention), on July 29, 2017 on the topic of "Raising Pious Children".

Huzoor[aa] started his address with this verse of the Holy Qur'ān:

'O Ye who believe! Fear Allāh; and let every soul look to what it sends forth for the morrow. And fear Allāh; verily Allāh is well aware of what you do.' (59:19)

Huzoor[aa] then stated:

"Ponder over what you have done to please God Almighty and what you have done to secure the future generation. The morrow should not be only the next day of our own life or the hereafter but **it also pertains to our children: to raise them piously, to raise them with the highest morals, to raise them with a firm resolve in their faith, to raise them as loyal citizens and to make them excel in every aspect of life.** This will not only adorn their lives in this world, and their lives in the hereafter and earn the pleasure of God Almighty, but it will also make us deserving of reward owing to the good upbringing we provided them. God Almighty does not let any good deed go by without a reward, then how could He not reward you for the works that you do purely to follow His commandment? Leaving behind pious children who pray for us will also adorn our future because they will continue our good deeds and pray for us and this will become a means of elevating our ranks in the hereafter."

As Ahmadī Muslim women, those of us who are mothers and those who will become mothers in the future, we can find beautiful guidance in the words of our Huzoor[aa] mentioned above. It draws our attention to the fact that desire of children should not only be for the sake of having one's own family and children but also to leave righteous progeny behind. Further, mothers have been made more responsible. Huzoor[aa] further draws our attention:

"Islām has placed the primary responsibility for training our next generation on mothers. It is women who can secure the future, not only of one generation but also of the subsequent generation. If a woman does not understand God Almighty's commandments or does not even make an effort to understand them, then we cannot guarantee that the next generation will be morally trained"

Thus, it becomes our responsibility to understand the teachings of Islām, and live our lives according to Islāmic values, so our future generations can do the same.

In the current issue of An-Nisaa', various articles have been published which speak to the importance, need and value of training children in Islāmic faith and the ways it can be achieved. The titles of some articles are, "Instilling the Value of Honesty in Children", "Inculcate Love of God from an Early Age", "Raising Children in the Light of Holy Qur'ān", "How to Use Social Media Effectively", "A Book Review on Muhammad in Bible" and many more including poetry from our Lajna members. I encourage you all to read these articles and provide feedback if any. I conclude this note with this Hadīth of the Holy Prophet[sa] and pray that may Allāh truly enable us all to become deserving of the high status of a true Muslim woman:

"Paradise lies under the feet of the mothers." (Kanz al-Ummal)

Sadiqa Hifsa

Spiritual Treasures from the Writings of the Promised Messiah[as]

The following excerpts are taken from The Essence of Islām: Volume III, pg. 335—336, (available online at www.alislam.org/books); a compilation of extracts from the writings, speeches, announcements and discourses of the Promised Messiah[as], translated into English by Hazrat Chaudhry Muhammad Zafrullah Khan[ra] and revised by Munawar Ahmad Saeed Sāhib.

PROPER UPBRINGING OF CHILDREN

I believe that beating children in a manner that the ill behaved child-beater pretends to be Allāh's partner in guiding and training children is a type of polytheism.

Pray for Children instead of Punishing Them

When a hot-tempered person is provoked and punishes a child, he takes on the role of an enemy in the stress of his anger and imposes punishment far in excess of the wrong which has been done. An individual with self-respect and control over himself, who is also forbearing and dignified, has the right to correct a child to a certain extent as the occasion demands or seek to guide the child. But a wrathful and hot-headed person who is easily provoked is not fit to be a guardian of children. I wish that, instead of punishing children, parents would have recourse to prayer, and should make it a habit to supplicate earnestly for their children; for the supplications of parents on behalf of their children meet with special acceptance.

[Malfuzāt, vol. 2, p. 4]

True guidance and training belongs to God Almighty. To pursue a matter persistently and to insist upon it unduly and to rebuke children upon every matter indicates that such a person imagines himself to be the source of guidance and believes that he will bring the children to order by pursuing his own method. This kind of attitude savours of a hidden assumption of association with the Divine and should be avoided by the members of our community. I pray for my children and require them to follow a broad set of rules of behaviour and no more. Beyond this I put my full trust in Allāh Almighty in the confidence that the seed of good fortune inherent in each of them will flower at its proper time.

[Malfuzāt, vol. 2, p. 5]

SUMMARY OF FRIDAY SERMON

Desire for children and their proper upbringing

A reminder to parents about their responsibilities with regard to the proper upbringing of their children in accordance with the teachings of Islām.

Both parents are guardians; both have to walk in the path of taqwa and do good deeds.

Be virtuous and set a righteous example for your children; pray and strive to make them righteous.

Source: https://www.alislam.org/friday-sermon/2017-07-14.html

On 14th July 2017, Hadrat Khalifatul-Masih V (May Allāh be his Helper) delivered the Friday Sermon at Baitul Futūh Mosque, London. A summary is presented below.

Many men and women write to me requesting prayers for their unborn child and seek advice and prayers for their expected child. At times, parents ask for guidance for their children who are getting closer to adolescence and adulthood. By the Grace of Allāh, the majority of the Community thinks in this manner and they are focused on how they should undertake the Tarbiyat (moral training) of their children. This is a great blessing and favour of Allāh the Almighty upon us Ahmadis that due to accepting the Promised Messiah[as], we think in this manner. In this age, where worldly desires have engulfed everyone, we are not only concerned about the worldly well-being of our children, rather, we also strive to care about the improvement of their faith.

Allāh the Almighty has also bestowed this favour upon us Muslims — there are clear guidelines for the moral training of children from even before their birth in the Holy Qur'ān. The Holy Qur'ān teaches prayers for this purpose. If we offer these supplications, and spend our lives in this way and pay attention to the Tarbiyat of our children, then we can send forth a pious progeny.

There is no doubt that the Tarbiyat of children is not an easy affair and especially in this age, where at every turn attractions created by Satan entice us in various ways. A true believer is indeed ex-

pected that being attached to Allāh the Almighty, he should save himself as well as his children from the onslaughts of Satan, instead of giving in to despair and negative feelings while being frightened. A harrowing example of negative thinking, came before my eyes when a person wrote to me that given the prevalent immorality in the world today and the state of the general moral depravity, I would choose to not have children after I get married. This is an extremely pessimistic view. This is akin to accepting defeat from Satan, taking Satan as the final authority and acting as though Allāh the Almighty has no power to save us and our children from the onslaughts of Satan, regardless of how much effort we exert and prayers we offer. In other words, this is like granting absolute freedom to the followers of Satan, leading to annihilation of the progeny of believers in due course. Hence, this way of thinking is extremely disappointing and does not behove the followers of the Promised Messiah[as]. In order to partake in the revolution for which the Promised Messiah[as] was sent to the world by Allāh the Exalted, we must use our capabilities and faculties to the utmost and we must also infuse this spirit into our offspring. We must pray for our objectives and bring our children up [in a manner] so that despite all of the filth and indecencies found in the society, we will not allow Satan to be victorious, Insha'Allāh [God willingly]. We must endeavour to establish the Kingdom of God on this earth. Thus, there is no need to be disheartened. Rather, we must act in accordance with the path prescribed by Allāh the Exalted with determination.

As I mentioned, Allāh the Exalted has taught us prayers in the Holy Qur'ān to be blessed with virtuous offspring. This is the prayer of the Prophet Zachariah[as], **"My Lord, grant me from Thyself pure offspring; surely, Thou art the Hearer of prayer."** (3:39) So, we should pray for virtuous progeny as well as act in a virtuous and pious manner, which are the characteristics of virtuous people and prophets. In order to safeguard our progeny from the evil influences of the time, it is necessary that both the husband and wife should act in a virtuous manner.

Munshi 'Ata Muhammad Sahib, the revenue collector, says that I was a non-Ahmadī, I did not practice faith, drank heavily and lived on bribes. I was invited to Ahmadiyyat by a friend. However, I wrote to the Promised Messiah[as] to pray for a son for myself. The Promised Messiah[as] replied that he'd pray for a son for him provided he repented as Zachariah[as] repented. Munshi Sahib says that I learned that the repentance of Zachariah[as] is to abstain from irreligiousness, earn lawfully, to regularly pray and fast and to visit the mosque more frequently. He says that upon hearing this, I refrained from alcohol, I abstained from taking bribes and became regular in praying and fasting. He says that a period of approximately four or five months had passed when my wife (the eldest wife, he had three wives) showed signs of pregnancy. I told people that I will be blessed with a son, who will be healthy as well as beautiful. Accordingly, a son was born. He says that I pledged initiation following that and many other people from that area also pledged initiation. Remember, when we offer the prayer of Zachariah[as] for our children, it is necessary for us to develop a pure change within ourselves as well.

This was a special case of a man with virtuous potential, however, acceptance of Ahmadiyyat cannot be conditional to any desires or personal gains. Becoming an Ahmadī on conditions is not [the definition of] accepting faith. If done so, it'd be akin to forcing Allāh the Exalted to accept our conditions. We are required to follow His guidance, He is not bound to follow our desires! Nevertheless, as I mentioned, whilst we pray for our children, we must also develop a pure change within ourselves. The prayer of Zachariah[as] is mentioned in Surah AlAnbiya' of the Holy Qur'ān –

'My Lord, leave me not childless, and Thou art the Best of inheritors.' (21:90). Since God Almighty has been called the 'Best of Inheritors', it is clear from this prayer that one should not pray to be granted offspring that can become their heirs in their worldly affairs, but instead such heirs be granted from God Almighty who give preference to their faith over the world. The desire to have children is a legitimate desire, but on top of that one must also pray for pious heirs. The Promised Messiah[as] in one place states: "The trial surrounding children is a great trial indeed. If the children are righteous then why should one worry? God Almighty Himself states: God Himself becomes the Friend and Protector of the righteous."

Then, in another place, whilst giving advice about children the Promised Messiah[as] states: "Become righteous yourselves and become an example of piety and righteousness for your children, and make efforts and pray to make them God-fearing and devout... The least one can do in training their children is to teach them about religion, and for them to remain firm in their faith with the same efforts they would make for themselves in worldly terms."

God Almighty has taught us the following prayer in the Holy Qur'ān: '...**And make my seed righteous for me. I do turn to Thee; and, truly, I am of those who submit *to Thee*.'** (46:16)

Here the prayer is for the reformation of children, and alongside it has been acknowledged that the individual will aspire to become among those who submit to and obey God Almighty. God Almighty has then taught us a very comprehensive prayer in the Holy Qur'ān; **'Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of *our* eyes, and make us a model for the righteous.'** (25: 75) Hence, with every prayer, God Almighty has repeatedly advised us in the Holy Qur'ān that we must watch over our deeds if we wish to have righteous offspring.

The Promised Messiah[as] explains that the desire to have children should not be merely to leave an heir to this world, but to have an heir who can continue the pious deeds of their elders. The Promised Messiah[as] states: "…One should also pay heed towards children's moral reformation. Allāh the Almighty has created man so that he may worship Him, just as Allāh the Almighty states, 'And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me.' However, if one does not become a Momin [believer]; and does not devote himself to the servitude of God; and does not fulfil the true objective of his creation, thus, until one does not desire for a progeny which is religious, full of piety and serves faith while displaying complete obedience to Allāh the Almighty, such a desire is completely futile, in fact it is a form of sin."

The Promised Messiah[as] further states: "If a person states that he longs for a virtuous and pious progeny which shall serve faith (which indeed is a great desire to have); however this will merely be a claim unless he makes an effort to improve his own condition." The Promised Messiah[as] states that moral training and prayers for this must be our top priority. "My own condition is such that there is not a single prayer of mine in which I do not pray for my friends, children and wife." The Promised Messiah[as] further states about children making mistakes in early childhood: "… If they are not stopped in their childhood and guided with love during their early years then gradually they will increase in their ill actions." In another place, the Promised Messiah[as] states: "It is also important to teach them about their faith. It should not be the case that they are completely occupied in pursuit of their secular education and worldly endeavours and that parents neither pay any heed to teach them about their faith and nor make any arrangements for them to be taught. It is extremely important to teach them about their faith and their beliefs."

Allāh the Almighty states: 'Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of *our eyes*, and make us a model for the righteous.' This can only be possible when they [i.e. the parents themselves] do not lead a life of disobedience and falsehood—instead they lead a life like the servants of the Gracious God. They give precedence to God over everything else. After this God Almighty has then further elaborated by saying 'and make us a model for the righteous'. If one's progeny is virtuous and righteous then surely, he must be their Imām [head]. Therefore, this is also a prayer for one to become a righteous person i.e. one prays for himself to become righteous and prays that Allāh the Almighty makes him tread upon the paths of righteousness and then this prayer includes the children to also become righteous. Therefore, with respect to children, one should always desire for their children to serve their faith. The parents of Waqfeen-e-Nau [scheme to devote children for the services of faith prior to birth] children should ensure that they guide their children towards their faith.

Amongst the Muslim community this has become commonplace and for this reason special efforts are made to have a male offspring. The men in turn give no share of the inheritance to their sisters. The parents leave no share of their wealth for their daughters and instead leave everything to their sons – which is contrary to the teachings of Islām – the men in return squander the wealth. Nevertheless, as I have already mentioned previously, the parents of Waqfeen-a-Nau children should pay special attention towards the moral training of their children and alongside this they must pray for them to achieve this goal; for their children to grow up to serve the faith in a manner whereby they give precedence to faith over all worldly pursuits. Thus, everyone should pray for their children to become righteous and develop a pure nature. The Promised Messiah[as] states: "The succour of God Almighty descends only upon those people who excel in virtuous deeds and do not remain at one station. These are the people who have a prosperous end." In order for one to receive a prosperous end the Promised Messiah[as] stated: "One should pray constantly for oneself, as well as their wife and children."

Then whilst advising us the Promised Messiah[as] stated: "Perform those deeds which set the best and perfect example for your children." This is the responsibility of the parents. The Promised Messiah[as] further elaborates by saying: "That is why it is necessary to first reform oneself. If you become a righteous and temperate individual and strive to please God, then Allāh the Almighty will always show benevolence to you and your offspring. In the Holy Qur'ān, the incident of Khizr and Prophet Moses[as] is mentioned that together they constructed a wall belonging to a few orphaned children. Referring to this God Almighty states: "their father had been a righteous man"; the condition of the children themselves was not mentioned, rather the parents were mentioned. The Promised Messiah[as] elaborates by saying: "Therefore, always desire for your progeny to become pious, in return God Almighty will grant you the means and provisions for progress. Thus, these are the fundamental principles towards which the Promised Messiah[as] advised us constantly. This in fact is an elaboration of the Quranic principles, that the conduct of the mother and father plays a big part in the upbringing of children.

May Allāh the Almighty grant every single one of us to become the best example for our children. May we fulfil the pledge of giving precedence to our faith over all worldly objects. Instead of looking towards others to see what their condition is – as is the habit of some people – we should focus on ourselves. Only then will we be able to leave a pious progeny for the future that will tread the path of righteousness. May we constantly pray for our children, so that God Almighty makes them the delight of our eyes. Amīn

The Moral Training of Children: Instill the Value of Honesty

By: Basima Shaikh – Woodbridge North

As the winter holiday comes around the corner, we see the display of bright lights and colours, along with the mythical creature dressed in a big red suit, Santa Claus. Children around the world wait for Christmas every year so they can have the opportunity to ask this man for all the toys their little hearts desire. Parents remind their children to behave all year long or else Santa will not grant them their wishes despite being aware that Santa is only a fictional character. They say it is just a white lie told to children to bring them joy, but is this not promoting a form of falsehood?

Adults may find themselves telling children many harmless lies in order to get them to obey. However, as Ahmadī Muslims, we are constantly reminded of the Holy Prophet[sa] saying, "Truth saves, falsehood destroys." (Bukhari and Muslim) As role models, adults should avoid telling any form of lie to children or to anyone else. Children are very innocent and will develop the habits they observe in their environment; however, parents should monitor their behaviour and guide them. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh II[ra], shares in his book, *Way of the Seekers*:

"Of all moral evils, lying is the worst…. A child is highly imaginative. Whatever it hears, it turns into a kind of reality. A sister of mine when she was a child used to relate a long dream every day. We would wonder how she could manage to have a dream every day. Later, the truth came out. What happened was that to her mind, dreams meant the ideas and pictures that crossed her mind before falling asleep. To a child every image is real. Thus, gradually it picks up this habit. A child should be helped to realise the difference between fact and fiction. A child can be saved from this habit [of lying], if the nature and meaning of thinking can be brought home to it." (*Way of the Seekers*, pg. 56)

Furthermore, if children discover that they have been told a lie, they will begin to lose trust in their parents. A child's relationship with their parents is a very valuable one and having a positive relationship will enable parents in the appropriate moral training of their children.

Simply teaching children to always be truthful will protect them from many vices and will lead them on the path of the righteous. Once a man, who was trying to reform himself and giving up the habit of committing sins, asked the Holy Prophet[sa] for advice. He did not know where to begin, and which vice to leave first. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] told him to begin by simply giving up the act of lying. A few days later, the man found himself drawn to alcohol and pondered, "What if the Prophet Muhammad[sa] asks me if I had any alcohol? I cannot tell him a lie." Therefore, he did not drink. Similarly, when he found himself contemplating to steal, he realised that he could not lie to the beloved Prophet[sa] about his acts. With this mindset, the man gave up all his vices one by one. If parents can instil the value of honesty in their children, they will have accomplished a major task in the moral training of their children. May Allāh enable us all to become truthful individuals and guide children to do the same. Amīn.

"**O ye who believe! fear Allāh, and say the right word."** (33:71).

Children's Moral Training

By: Sidra Tahir, Windsor

According to Islāmic traditions, the best gift that parents can provide to their children is moral training that can help them live as responsible Muslim adults, fulfilling the rights of Allāh and their fellow human beings. Moral training and education refer to the task of nurturing in children the virtues and values taught by Allāh in the Holy Qur'ān, and the noble examples of our Prophets who guided people, most importantly the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. Parents have been given the noble duty to ensure that their children receive a sound religious education and prepare for the afterlife. For raising children according to Qur'ānic principles, parenting efforts must start with earnest supplications to Allāh. The Holy Qur'ān teaches us what to pray for in the words of Hazrat Zachariah[as], **..'My Lord, grant me from Thyself pure offspring; surely, Thou art the Hearer of prayer.'** (3:39)

In today's society, a lot of emphasis is placed on secular education. A child is pushed to strive for excellence in academics. While a university education is undoubtedly important, the significance of a religious education must not be overlooked, as all the secular knowledge in the world cannot ensure success without the will of Allāh. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa] said, "There are clear guidelines for the moral training of children from even before their birth in the Holy Qur'ān...If we offer these supplications, and spend our lives in this way, and pay attention to the Tarbiyat of our children, then we can send forth a pious progeny". (Friday Sermon, July 14, 2017)

From a young age, children should be encouraged to pray and recite Qur'ān, as it is easier to develop consistent habits at an age where children are still willingly imitating the actions of their parents. The Holy Prophet[sa] said that children should be formally inspired to join their parents in prayer beginning at the age of 7 years old. As children become exposed to other interests, they should be admonished to become regular in daily prayers by the age of 10. By the age of 12, parents may only remind children about it. Thus, if parents heed the advice, they will save themselves and their children trial and anguish later in life.

While enforcing the above, the importance of love and mercy in the process of educating children should not be underemphasized. As the Holy Prophet[sa] stated, "Respect your children and cultivate good manners in them" (Ibn Majah). At times, parenting can be stressful and frustrating. In such moments, a parent should exercise self-control and refrain from meaningless threats, and verbal and physical abuse.

Seeing the Prophet[sa] kissing his grandson, a person named Al Aqra Ibn Habis found this behav-

iour odd and said, "I have ten children but I have never kissed any of them." The Prophet[sa] replied, "The one who has no compassion will not be treated mercifully." (Bukhari)

Further, the Promised Messiah[as] said, ""Beating of children is an act which can be termed as a sort of polytheism (shirk). It actually means that the ill-tempered person makes himself a partner of God in giving guidance and sustaining the creatures. I wish that, instead of punishing children parents would resort to prayer, and would make it a habit to supplicate earnestly for their children as the supplications of the parents for their children are particularly accepted by God." (Malfuzat, vol. 2, p. 4) ."

It is equally important to foster good self-esteem in one's children. In order to do this, parents should demonstrate respect and interest in their children in the following ways:

- Listen to their ideas and opinions
- Speak positively about them to others
- Do not interfere in everything your child does, they need space to develop a healthy independence

It is worth noting that as technology advances, the advent of internet and cell phones makes it difficult to ensure your child is being safe all the time. Parenting must be done with wisdom, and wisdom demands moderation. The Holy Prophet[sa] even said, "Moderation is best in all affairs." (Bukhāri) We must be involved in our children's lives in a mutually respectful manner, with frank and honest communication. The fact is, without creating a safe space for your child to speak to you, you risk knowing nothing of their personal affairs at all.

Above all, it is most important as parents to "practice what you preach". In order to teach proper values and develop long lasting habits, one must first demonstrate those same values and habits. When a child is exposed to hypocrisy, it is likely that he or she will follow the same path themselves.

Our children are but a sacred trust with us from Allāh, and raising children is a very serious, difficult, and humble undertaking. Parenting requires infinite prayers and patience. No matter how hard we strive, it is the mercy of Allāh that keeps our children on the right path.

May Allāh enable us to do so. Amīn.

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh III[rh] says: "Until you and your offspring achieve the status that Allāh Almighty has assured us of, you cannot attain the Paradise that is promised in the Holy Qur'ān for pious, steadfast, obedient and believing women. For this reason, today it is the responsibility of every Ahmadī woman— mother, sister, and wife—to properly train the next generation with even more prayers and prudence than she would for herself. Inculcate love for Allāh Almighty in the hearts of your children. The Holy Prophet[sa] was an outstanding human being. No one greater than him has ever been born among the descendants of Adam[as]. Instill love for the Holy Prophet[sa] in the hearts of your children."

(Address to Lajna Ima'illah UK by Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh III[rh], October 15, 1980)

How to instill the love of God from a young age?

By: Monahil Chaudry, Edmonton West

Allāh states in the Holy Qur'ān: **And those who say, 'Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of *our* eyes, and make us a model for the righteous.'** (25:75)

The effort to instill the love of God in one's child starts even before the child is born. The guidance for these efforts has been shared with us in the Holy Qur'ān and through the example of the Holy Prophet[sa]. The prayer in Surah Al-Furqan is one such guidance. In just one prayer Allāh teaches us not only how to pray for righteous and God-loving children but how to instill the love of Allāh in them as well. That is, through our own righteous conduct. In this prayer, Allāh has taught us to pray for our family before asking Him to make us role models. This prayer is a reminder that anything we desire can only be granted to us by God's Grace, even if it is His own love. These prayers make up the foundation to raising pious offspring and these prayers also serve as a safety net for our children where we fail as role models. As humans we are weak and make mistakes, prayers fill that gap and, in this case, help our children stay on the right path.

Apart from prayer, Allāh has laid out in Islām excellent teachings to raise righteous offspring. From birth, Allāh has set up a system so that the love and oneness of God will be the first words in a Muslim child's ears as the holy words of "Allahu Akbar" through Adhan are recited in each of their ears.

Moreover, God has also created each child with the inherent ability to love God. The Holy Prophet[sa] is reported to have said, "No child is born but in harmony with nature. It is his parents who turn him into a Jew or a Christian or a fire-worshipper." (Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Janai'z) Meaning, that it is us as parents who shape our children who they grow up to be. It should therefore be our responsibility that they keep this inherent ability, and we continue being excellent role models for them.

It is well known that children are very impressionable. Whatever we say or do around them, they try to imitate it. Our actions and words are our most effective tools when it comes to raising God-fearing children. If we wish to instill the love of God in our children, we must be punctual in prayers and recitation of the Holy Qur'ān. We should be perfecting ourselves so that our children could be perfect. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān, **'My Lord, make me observe Prayer, and my children *too*. Our Lord! *bestow Thy grace on me* and accept my prayer.'** (14:41) If we pray every day, our child will imitate us by praying from a very young age and thus we will instill the love of God through prayers in them. When we will recite the Qur'ān, our children will hear it and they will fall in love with the message of God.

It should also be kept in mind that no matter how young the child we should always be careful about what we say or do around them. We should try to

keep the remembrance of Allāh on our lips and recite prayers or religious poems near our children. This will instill an unconscious love of God in their heart and this impression will stay with them all their life.

As a child grows older we should teach the child to pray for themselves as well, whether it be through Salāt or prayers. This process will become easier if we ourselves performed these actions before the child reached a mature age. Our prayers as parents for our children will always be helpful to them but only when the child will start sincerely praying for themselves would God turn with even more love towards them. As the Holy Prophet[sa] explained in a hadith that Allāh says: 'When a servant of Mine advances towards Me a foot, I advance towards him a yard... and when he advances towards Me a yard, I advance toward him the length of his arms spread out. When he comes to Me walking, I go to him running. (Bukhari)

Prayer is the direct link to God and the best way to instill the love of God. Our actions and efforts can only do so much. The Promised Messiah[as] has given us his example so that we may follow it. He states:

"There are certain prayers that are a daily routine for me. I pray for myself that God may let me do the kind of things that would manifest His honor and grandeur and He may make me fully resigned to His will. Then I pray for my wife that He may grant me children through her who may prove to be the coolness of my eyes and who may live their lives in perfect accordance with the will of God. Then I pray for my children that God may make all of them servants of His religion." (Malfuzat, Vol. 2, p. 4)

Allāh has promised the reward of meeting one's children in the afterlife if we raise them in faith. Allāh says,

And those who believe and whose children follow them in faith — with them shall We join their children. And We will not diminish anything from *the reward of* their works. Every man stands pledged for what he has earned. (52:22).

Let us strive to achieve this through our actions in the present life. May Allāh enable us to fulfil our duties as parents and to instill the love of Allāh in our children. Amīn.

Hazrat Khalifatl Masih V[aa] says: Always remember this commandment and warning from Allāh:

'O ye who believe! save yourselves and your families from a Fire…' [Holy Qur'ān 66:7]

These days the glitz and glamor of this world, vain vulgarities and many societal ills are standing in front of us trying to ensnare us and take us away from morality; though these are not considered ills by western standards, these are ills according to Islāmic teachings. **As I said before, some wrong acts are done in the name of broad-mindedness, but then they keep pushing us towards evil. This is neither entertainment nor freedom; rather, these are pits of fire in the name of entertainment and freedom.** Allāh the Exalted, who is extremely Gracious to His people, has clearly explained for the believers that this is fire. This is a fire; save yourself from it and save your children from it. I say to the young men and women who live in this society that this is not the objective of your lives. Do not think that the purpose of your life is to get involved in these vain pursuits; that this [lifestyle] is all there is for us. Through the status of being an Ahmadī, there should be a difference between you and others."

(Friday sermon delivered 23 April 2010 in Switzerland. Published AlFazl International 14 May 2010)

Inculcate Love of God in Children

By: Bilquis Fatima, Halqa Martindale Skyview, Calgary

Children are the biggest blessing of Almighty Allāh. A house that has the laughter and innocent mischiefs of kids is full of life and enjoyment. Parents are always ready to do whatever they can to ensure the happiness and joy of their kids. From lavishing them with gifts that they can afford, to waking up and taking good care of them if they are unwell. From feeding them the best meals to providing proper education for them. Hence, parents cover all the basic aspects of life to ensure that nothing is lacking in the life of their child. Same way, it is very important to realize that a child's spiritual and religious wellbeing is equally essential.

There is a very thin line between spoiling a child with love and raising a brat that considers himself entitled to everything he wishes for. If a child is raised with proper and age appropriate religious knowledge, he won't bully or belittle other kids. Such a kid would know how and why it is important to listen to his parents; why lying is not okay and how we don't differentiate between humans on the basis of colour, caste or creed. But the important question that arises now is how to raise such a child who shows exemplary morals? The answer lies in our Islāmic teachings! Kids who are taught to love God since their childhood and seek His pleasure are extraordinary and decent in their behaviour.

As per a hadith, every child is born instinctively on Islām and then his parents make him a Jewish, Christian or an atheist — so love of God is always there but with proper nourishing and guidance a parent can raise a child who recognizes his Lord, Allāh the Almighty and follows His commands. Here, I am sharing a few pointers on how to raise moral and principled children:

Kalma e Tauheed:

A child as young as 2 years old can recite Kalma e Tauheed which means *"There is no God except Allāh and Muhammad[sa] is His Messenger".* This is the basis of our religion that we believe in the Oneness of Almighty Allāh and in the prophethood of Holy Prophet[sa]. A parent should instill the habit of reading this in front of kids and also telling its meaning to the child who is able to understand simple information.

5 Daily Prayers:

Kids are inquisitive and they love to look, learn and copy. If parents offer 5 daily prayers in front of their kids then even very little kids who can't even talk properly would join them on prayer mat and imitate the best they can. Kids who are a bit older should be told that we thank Allāh and ask for His mercy and forgiveness by praying the five daily prayers. They should be told that Salāt is a way of staying connected to our Creator.

Reciting Holy Qur'ān:

The fact that kids learn by example cannot be emphasized enough. Reciting the Holy Qur'ān out

loud in front of the kids and also reading out its translation will increase the curiosity in the tiny brains. Soon they will be asking you all different kinds of questions about something that they heard you saying while reading the translation and this will lead to a spike in curiosity and open windows to discussions on this magnificent Holy Book.

God is Everywhere:

Parents should tell their kids that Allāh is everywhere. He is aware of all our actions and knows what is in our hearts. They should be taught that it is not okay to lie as He knows when we lie and nothing is hidden from Him whether it is something we speak of or some action that we do.

In this regard it is again important to note that actions speak louder than words. If parents are advising their kids not to lie as it displeases God, but then lie to others in front them, then that is not going to set a very good example for kids. So, it's important to not only tell children to never lie but also to exemplify this behaviour.

Power of Prayer:

Parents should discuss with their kids that Allāh is always listening to our prayers. Through prayers we stay connected to Him. He listens and He answers. If the child is young and he wants a particular toy, parent can tell him to ask Allāh for it, as He is the divine power that can give or take away anything. At the same time it is also important to teach a child that if he didn't get something that he dearly prayed for, it is because Allāh knows that it wasn't beneficial for him and we are to stay thankful to Him in every situation.

Heaven and Hell:

Children should know about the concept of heaven and hell. Parents should teach them that good deeds are rewarded with heaven and people who fall prey to the Satan can end up in hell. Parents should teach them that Satan is our worst enemy who wants us to do bad deeds, so that we displease Allāh (God forbid!). Moreover, children should be taught that we can fight with Satan by remembering Allāh constantly. Lying, stealing, disobeying is not okay because it makesSatan happy and kids should try their best to fight the Satan to gain Allāh's pleasure.

Alhamdullilah, Allāh-o-Akbar, SubhanAllah:

Parents should teach their kids to count their blessings, and to always be grateful. They should be told that whatever we have is given to us by Allāh and that they should say "Alhamdullilah" whenever they receive something from parents or somebody else. This phrase means "all praise belongs to Allāh" and teaches to be thankful to God.

When a child hears a news that brings joy or grief, teach him to say "Allāh ho Akbar", which means "Allāh is the Greatest". So that the child learns that He is the Divine power who has control over everything and everyone.

If a child sees something that he likes or eats something that he enjoys ask him to say "SubhanAllah" which means "Holy is my Lord." This will teach the child that this beautiful thing he is looking at or eating is a blessing of God and not a work of a human or anything else.

Do Simple Things:

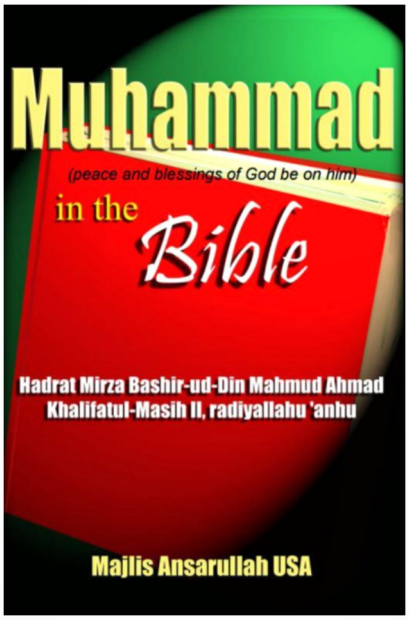
Life is all about the simple things that we do. Parents should strive to teach their children simple Islāmic values in their daily lives. For example, children should be taught that the hand that gives is better than the hand that takes is one of the basic Islāmic values. Also, teach your children that Islām

(Continued on page 32)

Book Review: Muhammad in the Bible

By: Maryam Tahir, Ahmadiyya Abode of Peace

A while back, I was curious about Christianity and wanted to know about arguments we can use for the truth of Islām. I became curious because I have noticed that there are a lot of young Christian influencers that are extremely confident in their beliefs, so much so, that for them Islām is not even an argument or a thought worth having. In all honesty, I started to become a little bit irritated with these influencers, but more so with myself, because I genuinely did not know enough to be able to confidently argue in favor of Islām. Why do these influencers make their religion and their lifestyle look so enticing? Because of this, I started to look for books that could give me some answers and speak to the truth of Islām over Christianity. This led me to read the book "Muhammad in the Bible" written by Hazrat Mirza Bashir uddin Mahmud Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīh II[ra]. This book is an absolute gem and I am so happy that I came across this read. I was blown away by this book and the arguments present in it. First of all, it's only about 40 pages. It was so short that I was able to finish it in one night. It also does not waste any time before getting into the facts. This book goes straight to point and it made me fall in love with Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd[ra]'s way of writing and the immense knowledge he possessed. The reason this book is so good for Christian debates, is because it uses the Bible to speak to the truth of the Holy Prophet[sa]. It also shows that we are all connected, going all the way back to Prophets before Christianity. This book shows us that the Holy Prophet[sa] was referenced IN THE BIBLE, that his coming was prophesized even in the Old Testament, and then gives conclusive arguments about how the Holy Prophet[sa] fulfilled the prophecy. I like that this book speaks to both the truth of the Bible and the truth of Islām. It shows us that Islām is an extension of Christianity, a continuation and completion. Therefore, it's okay to see Christians being confident in their religion, because it was at one point a true religion. We should respect everyone that follows the path leading to God. However, knowing what we know after reading this book, Muslims should be EVEN MORE confident, so confident that our life-style should become the most enticing and inviting to everyone else. This can only happen if we are actually AWARE of just how deep and how beautiful our religion is and what kind of connection it offers us that can lead one to God. I think that a lack of confidence in our religion or beliefs only stems from ignorance, and the more we study our religion, the more confident we will become. That is why I encourage EVERYONE should read this book.



Moral Values My Parents Taught Me

By: Parivash Kashif, Windsor

When we are first born into a family, as a child we do not know what race we are born in and what are the rules of living in this family or in the society at large. As we grow up, we learn our family values and how they live life, what they consider more important in life than anything else. While growing up I have learned many values from my parents that make me a well-rounded person. Some of the things that they have taught me are having a balance in life, respecting elders, never being afraid of trying something, and always giving your best.

Ever since I was little, my parents have always told me to live a balanced life. They have stressed the importance of prioritizing Jama`at work and academics over everything else. Along with Jama`at work and academics I am encouraged to engage in other activities, such as watching T.V., reading, relaxing and try to achieve a balance in them all. Alongside this my parents have also taught me to prioritize my work. For example, first I should finish a History project that is due in 2 or 3 days rather than a Science project that is due in a week. This has always helped me to stay on schedule, hand in my assignments on time and it eliminates a lot of stress that can be caused by school work.

I have always respected family members that are older than me. My parents have taught me what I should and should not say to the elders. They have taught me to always address my elders as uncle (for a male) or auntie/baji (for a female). This has influenced my life, because I respect everyone that is older than me. I never talk to them rudely and listen to them patiently. Overall, I think if you respect someone, you will also be respected in return and appreciated by everyone else. As I am growing up, I see all my family members that are younger than me, respect me and they always call me “baji” or “aapi” while addressing me.

Trying my best at anything I do is the best advice my parents have given me. This has taught me that no matter the outcome of the event I can always be proud of the work and effort I put in as long as I am honest and do it with full dedication. For example, a few years ago at the Local Nāsirāt Ijtima I won second in Hifz-e-Qur’ān competition, when my goal was to win first. Although I did not get my desired outcome, I was still proud of myself because I knew I worked hard, and I learned several new things along the way. I have learned that the experience and the chance to learn new things along the way are sometimes better than winning.

My parents have always told me to never be afraid to try something new. They say, “what’s the worst thing that could happen... they could say no?”. This has made me stronger and more confident when trying new things. I have learned from my parents that even if you do not get it right you can still learn from your mistakes and get it correct the next time. One of the sayings I live by is from a very well-known Theoretical Physicist, Albert Einstein, he said, “Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new.”

Overall, my parents' advice and help has encouraged me to become a kinder, smarter, and respectful human being. They have taught me to be strong,

diligent, and modest. I have learned how to balance my academics, Jama`at work and extra-curriculars. This has helped me be organized, neat and orderly. I regularly pray to Allāh for my parents' well-being and that they live a long, healthy, and successful life.

رَّبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيٰنِىْ صَغِيْرًا

'My Lord, have mercy on them even as they nourished me in *my* childhood.' (17:25)

How to Instill the Love of God Almighty from Childhood

By: Anila Sadiq, Windsor

The Holy Prophetsa has emphasized that a woman's duty to raise her children in the best manner is equivalent to Jihād. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh Vaa said in his address to Lajna Imāillāh Tanzania on May 10, 2005, "A tradition, however, states that just as the man of the house is the shepherd of the home, and is responsible for feeding and clothing his wife and children, giving them accommodation and providing for their other needs, so too is **the woman responsible for taking care of her husband's home and his children, for nourishing them, and for drawing their attention to good education and training. If she does not do this, then as a shepherd of the household and its custodian, God Almighty would hold her accountable.**" As mothers, we should bear this in mind that the moral training of a child begins from the very first day of their birth. The ideal method of doing moral training is to lead by example with regards to anything one wishes to teach their child. For example, if a mother wishes to teach her children to recite the Holy Qur'ān regularly and out loud, so they become familiar with the words of God Almighty, she should do it herself first. Similarly, she should offer Salāt regularly herself, to ensure that they learn from an early age. Allāh the Exalted states in the Holy Qur'ān, **"And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me."** (51:57) Thus, we should instill the love of God Almighty in our children and help them understand the purpose of our existence. It is important to attach our children to the mosque making sure they are in the company of good people. It is essential to help them build a connection with the Khalifah of the time and encourage them to watch MTA as it is a very useful tool. An effective method is by explaining to them via different examples that how Allāh the Exalted has provided us with everything that we use daily. Wherever we go, we should continue to remind our children that everything which we behold is created by God Almighty. Always being truthful to our children is extremely important. It is necessary for us to frequently expound on the benefits of good and the consequences of evil and that those who love Allāh the Exalted, above all, will be safeguarded by Him. Efforts should also be made to implement the sunnah (traditions) in our daily lives and to take heed from the hadiths of the Holy Prophetsa. Our beloved Imām Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh Vaa stated, "Islām has placed the primary responsibility for training our next generation on mothers. It is women who can secure the future, not only of one generation but also of the subsequent generation. If a woman does not understand God Almighty's commandments or does not even make an effort to understand them, then we cannot guarantee that the next generation will be morally trained." (Address at Jalsa Salana UK, 2017) Above all and most importantly, we must continue to pray to Allāh the Exalted for help and guidance for the best. May Allāh the Exalted show us the right path and help us through every step, Amīn.

An Educator's Perspective on Raising Children

By: Sobia Iqbal, Brampton Flowertown

When I started my Early Childhood Education diploma, my professors would say, "you're the expert on children but parents are the experts on their own child." It was a gentle reminder that educators and parents should learn from each other to best support each child. Now, as an educator, while I don't consider myself to be an "expert" on children, I do feel that I have gained some insight on ways we can support children in their upbringing—not just as parents, but as adults.

According to the philosopher, John Locke, children are tabula rasa, a blank slate. They have a natural curiosity which, if fostered, can help them grow into intelligent people with a love of learning. They are constantly asking "why" (as I'm sure many readers are aware), but it's because they truly wonder about the vast world they live in and the way it works. But, sometimes in an attempt to avoid chaos and disorder, we unknowingly hinder their curiosity. For example, in an interview on Goalcast, astrophysicist and author, Neil deGrasse Tyson pointed out that while many children enjoy playing in large puddles, their parents often move them away in order to keep them clean. That seemingly small action takes away a learning opportunity for them, where they can experiment with force—the cause and effect of the downward force of their feet jumping inside the puddle. These small actions can lead to greater discoveries for children, but we stop them in order to keep them clean. Children are messy, it's a fact. But, instead of fighting it, sometimes it helps to embrace the mess and make the most of the learning opportunities that come with it.

In addition, it's important to remember that children need to feel secure in order to fully benefit from their learning experiences. Children are really sensitive. I currently work primarily with children age 5 - 6 years of age and I know many of them seem incredibly self-assured (and incredibly sassy), but under that layer is a child that craves love, attention, and validation, just like adults, but doesn't know how to express that need. Being young, children are often unsure of themselves and seek validation from their caregivers. This is why it is important to constantly communicate with your child. Express your love and appreciation for them. That said, be mindful of the way that you do this. Instead of praise, try to use words of encouragement. For example, if a young child reads a book on their own, instead of saying, "You're so smart," it may be more beneficial to say, "I like the way you sounded out the words that were difficult for you." Or, if a child cleans their room or helps with household chores, instead of saying "You're such a good boy/girl," it helps to say, "I appreciate you cleaning your room." Not on-

ly does encouragement help children maintain humility, as Islām strongly emphasizes, but it teaches children to reflect on their actions and behaviours rather than seek external validation, which is often the case with praise. While praise may help a child accomplish a task in that moment, encouragement will guide them to make decisions based on internal reflection and will be more helpful as the child grows older. In the words of Austrian psychiatrist, Rudolf Dreikurs, "A child needs encouragement like a plant needs water." So please, do encourage your children often; not only will it teach them to self-evaluate, it will have a positive effect on their self-esteem.

Another area that many disagree on is how to handle negative behaviours in children. There are two types of negative behaviours—stress behaviours and misbehaviours. With stress behaviours, children act out because they are reacting to a stressor and are either unable to identify the stressor or do not know how to express themselves appropriately. Please bear in mind that children do not always understand why they may feel a certain way, and they are still learning how to express themselves. In these cases, it is helpful to remove the stressor; perhaps they are hungry or tired, or maybe the environment is too loud and is causing a sensory overload. It could be anything, but it is important to remain calm (I know, easier said than done), because your children react based on your reactions too. If you stay calm, that will encourage them to calm down, but if you get angry, they will react accordingly. Not only that, but the way we react to the child teaches them how to be treated. If you're constantly shouting at or berating your child, that is how they will expect to be treated by those around them as they grow older, and that is how they will treat others, too. However, if you speak with them calmly and gently explain to them why their behaviour is inappropriate, they will learn from your example, and they will treat others the same way.

In conclusion, I would like to leave you with a few final points. One, please remember that your children are people with thoughts and feelings, worthy of respect. In the words of our beloved Holy Prophet[sa],"Respect your children and cultivate good manners in them" (Ibn Majah). Often, many adults make the mistake of treating younger people as inferior, which will not only affect their self-esteem, but it will greatly affect your relationship with them. Second, enjoy your children. These moments don't last forever, and I know it can be overwhelming, but your children are very perceptive—if you treat them like a chore or a burden, that's what they'll feel like, and this will affect them long after childhood. So, take some time to enjoy opportunities with them—you don't want to miss out. Last, but not least, please, please, always remember that your well-being matters too. Being a parent is hard work and it is very easy to get lost in the day-to-day rush to get everything done, but it is incredibly important that you take care of your own physical, mental, and spiritual health and well-being. Your children don't need a parent that always gets everything done, they need a parent that's happy and healthy.

May Allāh enable us all to be the best we can. Amīn!

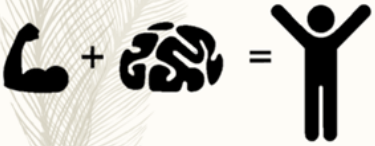
5 Ways to Build a Strong Bond with our Children

By: Fatima Cheema, Peace Village Centre East

1 Healthy Relationship with Our Spouse/Elders

- Look at the environment you are providing them
- Give a positive home atmosphere to your children
- Children will learn how to resolve issues (no yelling/screaming)

2 Set a Physically Healthy Routine for Them



- Good impact on your kid's physical appearance and mental strength
- Exercise helps your kids from preventing depression
- Exercising makes children happier

3 Create Quality Time with Them

- Show up
- Make them feel special
- Have a daily/weekly family meal together

4 Always Listen to What They Have to Say

- Listening to your children is as important as talking to them
- Two-way communication
- Don't expect perfection

5 Motivate Them to Sit With You When Watching MTA

- Children will follow in their parents footsteps
- Create quizzes, games about MTA shows
- Ask kids to write summaries of what they have learned

Mutual Understanding
Trust **Honesty** **Confidence**
Compassion **Respect**

Poetry

I am an Ahmadī Muslim Woman

I am an Ahmadī Muslim Woman
By birth, literacy is my right
I am always encouraged to learn, groom and widen my light
Inspired by my community to partake in all pursuits of life

I can work but I am not forced to
I am protected by Ahmadī men, with no fear to compete
Privileged with the freedom of speech
I can ask any question I like

Veil is my depth and openness is my strength,
I am not imposed to follow the fake trends;
Of heavy makeup and fitted outfits
I can feel beautiful wearing just my smile

I am an Ahmadī Muslim Woman,
#Empowered enough to know my rights

By: Huma, Toronto East

Poem Read to Huzoor[aa]

The Holy, the blessed "O' Masroor"
You are the one, our only Huzoor.

Your helpful guidance makes my life better,
Being able to ask a question, or talk to you through a letter.

It is amazing how far the Jamā'at has gone together,
Surely this impact will last forever.

More than 100 years have come and gone ,
But we continue to move on and on.

May Allāh bless you with a prosperous life,
As well as your kids and your wife.

By: Basmah Saboohi, Brampton McVean

Dear Mother

Effervescence of intense passion abounds you in every aspect
Words make a difference, your positive attitude a ripple effect
Bring a gentle breath of air into your world, the soft moonlight reflect
The language of love indeed had the most appealing dialect
Break the ice between yourself and your Creator,
Tenacity is in thy blood, Lord loves the vibrant colour of scarlet
Overturn the false dichotomy between science and mysticism
Reveal to the world the beautiful connection between cause and effect
Rear a blessed generation, with God, who forever strives to connect
Seek strength through constant prayer, through superior conduct your power of intellect
Observe the temptation of retaliation from a distance of a 1000 miles
Pay homage to Al-Kabir, true worship on-time never neglect !
Your pure heart a holy sanctuary of the Lord, your veil a high-walled fort
Be ambitious, be strong like no ordinary woman treat yourself with high respect
Like Saladin from Richard-the lionheart this sanctity of Jerusalem, well- protect
May the sweet cadence of the sky turn you into a God's instrument
Kneel down to Him so Angels descend from heavens to talk to ye direct
There's no cosmic darkness when ' the light' of Prophetic life ye reflect
Take joy in wearing a crown of thorns while crimson roses from on high ye collect !

By: Unknown (author did not write her name)

Mother

A mother is an angel here on earth.
The teacher of her child since birth.

She fights against odds and wipes her tears;
to save her child in this world of fears.

Mothers have paradise under their feet;
Treat them well, in the best manner you can.

God has created a mother with love.
The one who values her has a place high above.

By: Meena Almas, Brampton Heartlake

Training of Children

By: Amatus Salam Riffat

There *and then* did Zachariah pray to his Lord, saying, 'My Lord, grant me from Thyself pure offspring; surely, Thou art the Hearer of prayer.' (3:39)

Allāh the Exalted has taught us many prayers in the Holy Qur'ān, including the one to be blessed with virtuous offspring. This is the prayer of the Prophet Zachariah[as] mentioned in the verse above: **"My Lord, grant me from Thyself pure offspring; surely, Thou art the Hearer of prayer."** Our beloved Imām, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V[aa] said in a Friday Sermon, "Remember, when we offer the prayer of Zachariah for our children, it is necessary for us to develop a pure change within ourselves as well." (Friday Sermon July 14, 2017) So, when there is a desire for pure children, there should be prayers made for this purpose. Also, parents should strive to have those pure thoughts and deeds which are the attributes of the righteous and the prophets of God.

Parents should also attend to the moral training of their children from a very young age. In a Friday sermon Huzoor[aa] explained how the environment affects the mind of children and plays a role in building their character. He said:

"In the fitrat (nature) of man, Allāh the Exalted has placed a tendency to copy others in our surroundings, which manifests from childhood, as it is part of the nature of man. Hence, the tendency to copy others is in the nature of a child. This tendency is certainly for our benefit, but the wrong use sometimes leads to man's destruction or takes him towards destruction. **It is a consequence of this tendency to copy and be influenced by his environment that man learns a language from one's parents, learns other deeds and good things which make a child a well-mannered person. If the parents are virtuous, observe the Salāt, read and recite the Holy Qur'ān, live with each other in an atmosphere of love and affection, and abhor falsehood, then the children under their influence will adopt virtues.** On the contrary, if the child sees lying, fighting and disputes, making fun of others in the home, not giving due regard to the dignity of the Jamā'at or other such bad actions, then because of that tendency to copy or because of the impact of the environment the child learns these evils. When he goes out, he tries to learn whatever he sees in his surroundings and among his friends. **This is why I repeatedly draw attention of the parents that they should keep an eye on the outside environment of the children. And even within the home they should keep an eye on the programs that they watch on television or their Internet usage."** (Friday sermon delivered 13 December 2013 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London. Published AlFazl International 03 January 2014)

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II[ra] explained that Allāh Almighty has bestowed a special aptitude for this task on mothers because they have the capacity to

resist Satan. Huzoor[ra] said: "...**it is only women who can challenge Satan permanently. If women decide that they are going to make the future generations servants of religion, then who will Satan corrupt? The future generation is not influenced by Satan but by their mothers; but mothers can make the mistake of letting them go so that they become prey to Satan.....You must understand your responsibilities.**" (*Paradise Under Your Feet*, page4)

Mothers are usually the primary care-givers, and most of parenting and nurturing falls on a mother - that is why it is the responsibility of the mothers to train their children morally and spiritually. Investing in the children today at a young age means that mothers are grooming the future of our Jamā'at, because one day these children will become part of the system of Jamā'at.

Every child is born with a pure heart and as per the Islāmic traditions, it is the privilege of a child born in a Muslim family to start off their life with the beautiful verses of "Adhan". We as Ahmadī Muslims are further fortunate to have true version of Islām and thus, we should be vigilant to engrave this belief in our youngsters. It is them who will carry forth the Promised Messiah's mission and message. A child's mind is like molten metal whatever you will carve in at a young age, will solidify as a life long belief. Currently, we are facing great challenges in teaching our children. Multimedia has increased the difficulty tenfold when evil and sin is presented in colorfully wrapped packages to attract the young inquisitive minds. They have questions, they want rational reasoning and explanations. We need to be formidable and well informed and most importantly we should prepare ourselves with lots and lots of knowledge of Islām and Ahmadiyyat to have a dialogue with them.

Whilst giving advice about children the Promised Messiah[as] states: "**Become righteous yourselves and become an example of piety and righteousness for your children, and make efforts and pray to make them God-fearing and devout. .. The least one can do in training their children is to teach them about religion and for them to remain firm to their faith with the same effort they make for them in worldly terms**. ..." (Friday Sermon July 14th, 2017)

A child's first role model is his/her mother. So, we should try to be the best example of an Ahmadī mother. So, our children should learn from our actions and not just words. We should be very mindful when talking to others in front of them, as our words can inadvertently damage their own mindset. We should teach our kids to be modest and virtuous. Encourage them to actively participate in all programs of Jamā'at, must watch MTA programs specially broadcasted for young kids. If we love our beloved Khalīfatul-Masīh, then our children shall also do that. God Almighty has taught us the following prayer in the Holy Qur'ān: **'...And make my seed righteous for me. I do turn to Thee; and, truly, I am of those who submit *to Thee*.'** (47:16)

May Allāh enable us to raise our young generation as per the Islāmic traditions and guidance, so that they turn out to be the apple of our eyes. Amīn!

The Holy Prophet[sa] is reported to have said, "**Respect your children and cultivate in them the best of manners.**" (Ibn Maja)

Moral Training of Children

By: Needa Chawdhry, Calgary NW

In today's day and age, raising children in an Islāmic manner can be quite a daunting task. Many of us and our children have been born and raised in Canada and finding that middle ground between our Islāmic identity and Canadian identity can take years to master. In the book, *Way of the Seekers* written by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīh II[ra]—he has given great advice as to how to morally train children in today's society. He states in the book that as soon as a child is born, the first step towards their education is to proclaim Azaan into their ears. A child should be kept neat and tidy and, should always have a clean body. The state of their physical cleanliness greatly impacts their mind as well. A child should be fed at fixed hours. This will breed the habit of self-control and save it from a number of evils. Regular food habits will further lead to good habits such as punctuality, self-control and good health. The child who is given meals at odd hours will eat less and waste more. Food should be served according to a prescribed measure. This will teach the child contentment and discourage gluttony. (*Way of the Seekers*, pg. 50—52)

As the child grows, they should be asked to do small tasks under the guise of play-acting. They should be asked to fetch a utensil, to replace or carry an object and other small tasks, but should also have time to play on their own. A child should be assigned responsible jobs suited to its age. This will help create a sense of responsibility in the child.

The Holy Prophet[sa] stated: 'Do not curse a child for when you curse, angels add: Let it be like that; and like that he becomes. When you tell a child it is bad, it draws an imaginary picture in which it figures itself out as bad and does in fact become bad.' Therefore, do not abuse a child. Praise it and teach it to be good. Address a child politely and courteously, for a child is a great mimic. If you address it rudely, it will return the compliment in kind. Do not lie to a child nor be peevish or arrogant with it. It will certainly imitate you. It is the parents who teach a child lying. Teach them to admit their mistakes, as a matter of habit. Be sympathetic when it commits a mistake. Let it feel that the mistake is a kind of loss it has suffered. Hence so much sympathy. Also let it feel that a particular mistake has resulted in a certain loss. (*Way of the Seekers*, pg. 53—57)

A child should be given constant guidance in matters of etiquette. Moral training of children is not an overnight task therefore constant reminders and efforts need to be put into this rewarding task. May Allāh enable us all as current and future mothers to carry out this task to the best of our abilities, Amīn.

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Raising Children in the Light of Holy Qur'ān

By: Imrana Faisal, Brampton East

Verily, your wealth and your children are a trial; but with Allāh is an immense reward. (64:16)

Indeed, the upbringing of children is stated as a 'trial' in our Holy Book. On several occasions, Qur'ān stresses on how the upbringing of children can be a trial for Muslims. While children look up to their parents as the fountain of knowledge, many parents don't set up great examples in showing their commitment to Islām and Allāh. In order to tackle this, many parents use the wing of child abuse to force their children on the path of Islāmic teaching.

To judge the relation between parents and children in Islām, let us remember an incident from our dearest Prophet Muhammad[sa]'s life. Once an Arabic Bedouin visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] while he was hugging and kissing his grandsons, Hasan and Hussain. Surprised to see this, the Bedouin asked the Holy Prophet[sa], "**O Messenger of Allah[sa]! Do you also caress children, I have ten children, but I have never fondled even one of them?**" Hearing this, the Messenger of Allah[sa] said, "**It seems mercy and kindness have left your heart."** (Sahih Bukhari)

This hadith teaches us that parents should show affection to their children. However, they have been given the noble duty of guiding the future generation. It is their task to ensure that their children get a sound religious education. In this they are carrying on the work of the Prophets, who guided the people. The Holy Qur'ān says:

O ye who believe! save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stones, (66: 7)

In today's society, a lot of emphasis is placed on secular education. A child is pushed to strive for excellence in academics. A college or University education is a necessity, both for boys and girls. Education is indeed very important, but the significance of religious education for a balanced personality must not be overlooked.

The world is producing a generation that knows a lot, but is greatly deficient in moral and spiritual values. Parents have to ensure that both the religious and spiritual education is taught to their children.

Below I mention a few things, parents can employ to better train their children morally and spiritually.

<u>Be a model to your children</u>

Actions speak much louder than words. No amount of advice of a parent to refrain from backbiting will work if the child often hears the parent backbiting himself. When the child is exposed to hypocrisy, lying, selfishness and other such qualities at home, it is very likely that he/she will grow up following the same. A good example from the parents works even without words.

A child who grows up in a home where time of prayers is maintained, where hypocrisy in relations is avoided, and where contentment prevails, will grow up to do the same. Although it may seem a huge task to be able to be a good model for the child, parents should know that it is the only way they can really teach their children. No other way is as effective.

Relate stories

Stories are a very appealing way to teach lessons. The Holy Qur'ān says after narrating the story of Prophet Yusuf[as]:

Assuredly, in their narrative is a lesson for men of understanding. (12:112)

Children are especially fascinated by stories. They can become absorbed in a story without realizing that they are learning some lessons. Many parents read to their children each day, especially when the children are young. It would be a good idea to occasionally read Islāmic story books. Many of these are available today, with beautiful and colorful illustrations.

Parents should use these to inspire children. As they begin to read by themselves, parents should encourage occasional reading of some good Islāmic and moral books. When left to decide for themselves, children read a lot of junk literature. If it is not possible to avoid all of it, it should be at least minimized as much as possible. The child must be given alternative choices so that he can still read.

Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd[ra] says in his book *Way of Seekers,* "Tell the child that it is nice and good. The Holy Prophet[sa] said: Do not curse a child for when you curse, angels add: Let it be like that; and like that he becomes. Incidentally, this also means that angels are responsible for the consequences of actions. When you tell a child it is bad, it draws an imaginary picture in which it figures itself out as bad and does in fact become bad. Therefore, do not abuse a child. Praise it and teach it to be good. This morning, my little girl came to me to ask me for a coin. When I wanted to give her the coin, she extended her left hand to receive it. I told her this was not right. She admitted she was wrong and promised not to repeat her mistake. She at once became conscious of her mistake when it was pointed out to her." (*Way of Seekers,* pg. 54 ,55)

In the end, I would like to mention an Important Hadīth of the Holy Prophet[sa],

"If a person dies, his/her deeds are cut off, except from three: a pious child who prays for the parents; continuous charitable deeds; and knowledge left behind which benefits people." (Muslim)

The Hadīth shows the significance of how the upbringing of righteous children can benefit parents as well. Parents need to treat their children with kindness, love, and mercy; this will not only benefit the society at large, but also ease their pain in their graves.

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- Friday Sermon, July 14th 2017

How to Use Social Media Effectively

By: Fajar Wadood, Vaughan North

Social Media is one of the most popular forms of communication in today's generation. Social Media consists of many categories of online communication, including WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, Tiktok, YouTube, etc. There are pros and cons to everything, including technology, so what are some advantages and disadvantages of the usage of social media? And how can one protect one's modesty while still navigating social media? And how can parents ensure that upbringing of children is done properly while they grow up in a digital world?

The True Purpose of Our Creation

Before digging into the topic of social media, let us remind ourselves of the true purpose of our creation. We must be mindful and keep "Taqwa" in our hearts before proceeding with any action. Allāh, the Almighty states in the Holy Qur'ān, **'And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me.'** (51:57). The first and foremost purpose of our creation is to worship Allāh, the Almighty.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Social Media

One of the biggest advantages of the online world is our constant ability to stay connected with Khalīfa of the time. No matter where our beloved Huzoor[aa] is in the world, we can still be with him without being physically there. This is all due to the blessings of the Muslim Television Ahmadiyya (MTA), and social media platforms where individuals can keep themselves updated about Huzoor[aa]'s guidance. Thanks to the innovation of technology, a variety of simple and free methods are available which makes it easier to send letters to Huzoor Anwar[aa].

By the Grace of Allāh, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is also taking advantage of the digital world, especially during the COVID-19 situation where opportunities to perform Tablīgh activities are very few under these circumstances. We can use technology and social media and play our role and help spread the true message of Islām. The Promised Messiah[as] received a revelation which portrays, "I shall cause thy message to reach the corners of the earth". This prophecy of the Promised Messiah[as] is being fulfilled in various ways. We can use our personal social media platforms for the propagation of Islām. There are many wonderful campaigns that Jamā'at encourages the members to take part in, for example, hashtags such as Reviving True Islām. Social Media is a wonderful tool to use as Jihād of the Pen. Let's take this opportunity and remove misconceptions regarding Islām.

While social media is a remarkable communication method, it definitely comes with consequences. Social Media can be addicting. People are spending excessive amounts of time on these sites, solely for the purpose of showing off. They

are constantly posting and expecting a competition of getting the most likes. This can have an impact on our mental health. Our purpose of creation is to please Allāh the Almighty, instead of expecting pleasure from the society. Not only will it affect one's mental health, but physical health as well. Overuse of technology can lead to health problems such as eye strain. In a MTA talk show, Social Media and Technology, Dr. Omar Shahab Khan mentioned that too much time on social media can result in posture issues, deafness, and obesity. Mental and physical health are both equally important to lead a normal life. Being creations of Allāh, the Almighty, we must safeguard ourselves from all harms.

It is crucial to constantly remind ourselves about the true reasoning of our existence. One of the obligations we must fulfill to attain the pleasure of Allāh the Almighty is the regularity of our Salāt. Huzoor Anwar[aa] mentions in the book, Social Media, "**Evils of these days include television and the Internet. You can observe this in most homes that the eldest to the youngest are not offering Fajr Salāt on time as they were either watching TV or were online on the Internet until late, watching some program and, as a result, they could not wake up on time. In fact, such people do not even realize that they have to get up for Salāt in the morning. Both the Internet and TV and similar useless things not only cause you to miss your Salāt once or twice, but those who fall victim to this behavior get into this habit of watching programs until late at night or sitting on the Internet. Then it becomes difficult to get up for the prayer in the morning and [such people] may not even wake up [at a reasonable time]. Some people eventually fail to give any importance to Salāt"** (P. 6-7). Observance of Salāt has no exception. It must be offered so we may become answerable to Allāh on the day of judgment.

Privacy is another concern. Despite having the control of privacy through privacy settings, the information roams around. Even the most trusted followers may share your posts which may circulate forever and will stay on the internet forever. It is very crucial to be conscious of what one is posting. Social Media can also be used for investigation purposes, for example, by the police to find evidence based on a criminal activity. Deleting one's history can only protect a person so much, professionals have access to your deleted history.

Social Media and Modesty

As Ahmadī Muslim Women, we always need to be mindful of our modesty. The Holy Prophet[sa] said: "Modesty is part of faith". Consideration of modesty does not lie with women alone; it is also commanded upon men. Allāh, the Almighty has commanded men to ponder over modesty, before women are commanded to cover up. It is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, "Say to the believing men that they restrain their eyes and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Surely, Allāh is well aware of what they do" (24:31). Our dignity relies on physical and spiritual actions. The online world is not very distinguished from the offline world. Huzoor Anwar[aa] has constantly instructed females not to post images of themselves, i.e., faces and any body parts. It is very important to be mindful of who one is keeping in contact with. Huzoor[aa] gave comprehensive instructions to Khuddam about developing noble character and self-control. He said: **"Further there are many other vices and ills that are spreading immorality in today's society and sadly they are increasing by the day. For example, the misuse of the Internet and Social Media is becoming increasingly common and this includes inappropriate chatting between boys and girls online. Similarly,**

the Internet is being used to watch indecent and immoral films including pornography. The smoking of cigarettes or the use of shisha are also examples of vices that are spreading. Furthermore, even the permissible things can cause harm if they are misused" (Address to Khuddamul Ahmadiyya at Annual Ijtema UK 26 September 2016). Islām does not forbid one from the usage of such innovations, instead it promotes moderation. Individuals must be extra careful with whom they are staying in contact. Huzoor[aa] strongly emphasized in his book, Social Media, "Men and women should not chat on Skype and Facebook and look at each other and should not make these a means of connecting with each other. God states that these are all open and hidden foul things and they result in one getting carried away with emotions, losing one's sense and judgement and eventually incurring God's displeasure by disobeying His Commandments" (P. 38-39). Even in matters of Tablīgh, women should do Tablīgh to women only.

Social Media and Upbringing of Children

It is the duty of parents to be role models for their children. Whatever parents do, children copy. While it is important to keep an eye on what children are doing behind their screens, it is equally important to trust them. The Tarbiyat of children depends upon how parents act in front of their children and their method of instilling good habits in them. Allāh, the Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān, 'O ye who believe! save yourselves and your families from a Fire…' [66:7]. Generally, it is considered that only mothers are responsible for the upbringing of their children. The fact is that, Allāh the Almighty blesses children with both, a mother and a father. Huzoor Anwar[aa] mentioned in the book, Social Media, **"In particular, as the head of the household, men have the greatest duty and obligation to save their children from falling in the fire. Allāh through His Benevolence, saved you or your elders from suffering the torment of the fire by enabling you or your elders to recognize the Imām of this age**" (Page 20). Tarbiyat of children plays a major role in how they turn out once they grow up.

Though there are many benefits and consequences to actively use social media, it is a wonderful tool as long as one is operating it moderately. Men and women should both be mindful of their modesty when approaching such platforms. Training of children begins from the day a child is born, and results of good Tarbiyat can become apparent when children themselves become exposed to technology and social media. Usage of such sources is not forbidden in Islām; however, moderation is encouraged.

May Allāh help me and all of us to realize the true purpose of our creation and use our tools in a way that is most pleasing in the eyes of Allāh, the Almighty. Amīn.

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Holy Qur'ān — Treasure of Jewels

By: Muzna Ahmed, Brampton McVean

In our society, knowledge is sought after desperately, in times where horrific war and conflict is taking place, where world leaders are being more reckless than reliable, and there seems to be no clear action to take. And yet, many of us take for granted a resource that we have infinite access to the Holy Book which can guide us in both tremulous and joyous times; the Book which our Gracious God revealed to the Holy Prophet[sa]: the Holy Qur'ān, the treasure of jewels.

In an era where people are losing their faith, we Ahmadī Muslims should turn towards the matchless Holy Qur'ān, which is unique in all its facets. In chapter 31, verse 27-28, Allāh states:

To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. Verily, Allāh is Self-Sufficient, Praiseworthy. And if all the trees that are in the earth were pens, and the ocean *were ink*, with seven oceans swelling it thereafter, the words of Allāh would not be exhausted. Surely, Allāh is Mighty, Wise. (31: 27-28)

This is what makes the Holy Qur'ān unparalleled. All of Allāh's creation are endless, so how can man fathom this Holy Book to be confined to contain a few meanings? Rather, its insights are boundless and applicable to any and every circumstance.

Our beloved Imām, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa], narrated an incident in his Friday Sermon delivered on July 11, 2014. He said, "Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh III[rh] once explained that a Pakistani minister went on a tour of China in the days of Mao Tse-tung. He asked Mao why he brought about a revolution in his nation. Mao replied "why do you ask me, go and observe the model of your Prophet and read your Qur'ān and practice it and you will find everything!" This incident shows us that even those who are not true believers of Islām, see a holy light in the Qur'ān." (Friday Sermon, July 11, 2014)

The Holy Qur'ān has fulfilled many prophecies, proving its eternal truths. One of which opposes a prominent stereotype thought towards Muslims regarding women's rights. The Holy Qur'ān says: **And when the girl-child buried alive is questioned about, 'For what crime was she killed?' (81:9-10)**

The freedom of women's rights was foretold centuries before modern day feminists propagated the movement. What a beautiful thought! The Holy Qur'ān has laid out our rights before the era of activism!

Here is an extraordinary gem of this Holy book. The Holy Qur'ān's authenticity is another reason for this book to be known as the treasure of all jewels. Every sacred Scripture revealed before the Qur'ān has been altered by man in some way. They have all been altered to such an extent that an earnest seeker finds it impossible to adopt any of them as a practical guide. In contrast, the text of the Qur'ān has been preserved intact and every word of it has come to us free from interference. All copies of the Qur'ān in the world today are identical down to a single letter. And this is not strange since God says in the Holy Qur'ān that He Himself will guard this book:

Verily, We Ourself have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We will be its Guardian.(15:10)

The Holy Qur'ān is a rare pearl that has the divine power to purify everything. So much so, that I believe if we were to immerse ourselves in the riches of the Qur'ān, we all could better our lives. In a Hadīth, Hazrat Zaid bin Arqam[ra] narrates: "One day, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said:

"0 people! I am a human being. It is likely that one day a messenger from my Lord will come to me, and then I will depart from this world. **I am leaving two important things among you: one of which is the Book of Allāh, containing guidance and light. So, hold fast to the Book of Allāh and abide by it**." (Muslim) Taken from *Selected Sayings of the Holy Prophet of Islām*, Hadīth No. 18, pg. 14)

Whenever one reads the Holy Qur'ān, a certain contentment fills the heart. In fact, I feel it is as if your troubles are being soothed by the stunningly formulated language. The Promised Messiah[as] once stated "The Holy Qur'ān is such a sparkling ruby and such a bright Sun that the rays of its truth and the gleam of its Divine origin are not only evident from one or two aspects, but are quite vivid through its numberless aspects". (Minan-ur-Rahman,,p. I)

I pray that we all can appreciate the glory and gift we have in the Holy Qur'ān and truly come to honour it on a regular basis. Amīn.

(Continued from page 14)

considers all humans equal, and that their white friends are not superior to them, nor their dark friends less deserving in anyway. When going outside with kids show them the beauty of nature and tell them that this is all work of God. He has created such a beautiful world, the shining stars and the unbelievable landscapes. So, imagine about His Supreme Power! No one else can compete with Him as He is All-Knowing.

Parents should also adopt the habit of giving charity, and encourage their children to do the same with their money allowance. They should also be on good terms with neighbours. Children should be taught that Allāh loves people who help and love humanity and don't hurt them with their tongue or hand.

Similarly, as most often, children are often interested in animals, so tell them accordingly that animals are a creation of Allāh and they cannot express themselves like we humans do — so, it is important to take care of them and not hurt them.

In conclusion, I would say that instilling the love of God in your child from a young age is not a difficult task. All that has to be done is becoming an example in front of them to follow. Offering Salāt on time, always remembering Allāh in times of distress and still not being unthankful; and remembering Him in times of happiness and thanking Him are all small examples by which kids learn. Helping humanity and being kind to each other is also a trait liked by Allāh the Almighty and doing so will instill the love of God in a child's heart. May we become able to raise pious children who firmly believe in Him, and trust and love His decisions with all their hearts. Amīn!

Nāsirāt Corner

Moral Training of Children

Huzoor[aa] stresses a lot of importance on the moral training of young children. This is mainly because, when a child is taught something at a young age, that piece of information becomes a part of their foundation. In this way, when given good moral training, as they grow older, they become more understanding and they will have *Taqwa* (Fear of God). Eventually, they will be able to responsibly differentiate between right and wrong. If good moral training is given to a child, they will be able to build from that and teach themselves various important values. Thus, when they enter adulthood, they will be a helpful member of society.

By: Jawairia Ahmed — PVSE

The moral training of children is extremely important for their overall wellbeing. Children should be taught certain things at a young age, such as offering five daily prayers, reading the Holy Qur'ān, and etiquettes of becoming good Muslims. There are so many morals that children need to know, and for every moral they learn, they gain blessings and Allāh's praise. Overall, moral training is an influential part of every Muslim child's life, and should be highlighted, so that the kids can truly understand the importance of it.

By: Maryam Bhalli — PVSE

How my parents connected me to Khilāfat

by Fiza Hashmat

Ever since I was young my parents have always connected me to Khilāfat by encouraging me to stay connected to my religion. Some of the ways they have done this is by putting on MTA daily, bringing me to religious events and encouraging me to write letters to Huzoor[aa]. My dad always reminds me that you must write a letter to Huzoor[aa] every month so you can have a connection to the head of Ahmadiyaat. My family also encourages me to watch new programs on MTA so that I can have more interest in my religion. They also encourage me to listen to the Friday sermon and to help me truly understand it. Another way my parents help me stay connected is by encouraging me to stay informed and read Jamā'at books. I also do my Nāsirāt homework which my mom tells me is very important because you are more connected to Khilāfat if you have knowledge about your religion. My mom always tells me that how I act at school is very important for Tablīgh. If I am kind and showcase that I am a good person to others, then other people will become curious as to what religion I am from and may be inspired to learn more about Ahmadiyyat. Overall, my parents help me to attain lots of knowledge about Ahmadiyyat and also encourage me to stay active in the Jamā'at. These are some ways that my parents help me stay connected to Khilāfat and our beloved Huzoor[aa].

Being Grateful

By: Sabaa Shahzad Mian, Calgary NW

Islām teaches us many important morals and values. From modesty/purdah to rules about when to pick up the sword. They all have beautiful wisdom behind them as to why they exist. An Islāmic principle, that I want to talk about is thankfulness.

This weekend my abba (dad) took my family out to eat at a nice restaurant in downtown Calgary. Right away, I was thankful to Allāh, that He had blessed us with the opportunity to spend time with our family. Afterwards, we took a ride on C – Train, which is free in downtown zone. This is an example of another thing to be thankful for. In my city, if you're travelling on transit anywhere in downtown, it's free.

While travelling on public transit, you run into many different kinds of people, especially in downtown. In downtown a great number of homeless populations can also be seen. I sometimes see kids that are my age, hanging out in large friend groups, with free mixing of both males and females. Just seeing them makes me uncomfortable. When I see examples like these, I begin to understand why Islām has provided so many rules for segregation of the genders and modesty. It's not just an issue with non-Muslim youth, many times, these groups that I see, consist of fellow Muslim teens. This shows us how we can always improve in what we do. This makes me thankful that not only I'm an Ahmadī Muslim, who has a Jamā'at and a Khalīfa to guide me, but also that my mother grew up in an Ahmadī Muslim home, where a lot of stress was put on Tarbiyat (spiritual upbringing). Because of this, I have my mother to properly raise me as an Ahmadī girl growing up in the Western world. Any advice or instruction my mother gives me comes directly from the Holy Qur'ān or an example of the Holy Prophet[sa] or our beloved Khulafā'.

From a very young age I had the love of Khilāfat instilled in my heart, and a great interest in the stories of several Prophets[as] of Allāh. I am very thankful for the blessing of Khalifat. The Muslim ummah is thirsty for something missing, but they don't know what. What are they doing wrong? What they need is leadership, which tells them guidance directly from Allāh and - Alhumdulillah - as Ahmadis we have a global Khalīfa[aa] appointed by Allāh Himself. This just briefly explains some of the things I am thankful for. In Surah Az-Zumar verse 67 Almighty Allāh says:

بَلِ اللّٰهَ فَاعْبُدْ وَ كُنْ مِّنَ الشّٰكِرِيْنَ ﴿﴾

Aye, worship Allāh and be among the thankful. (39:67)

May Allāh, the Almighty make us from among those who worship Him and are thankful to Him. (Amīn)

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